

# Office Memorandum • UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

TO : John A. Derry, Executive Officer

FROM : Ward Miller, Civil Defense Liaison Branch

SUBJECT: REPORT OF NSRB MEETING APRIL 17-18, 1950

SYMBOL: BHC:WM

DATE: April 20, 1950

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The following agencies were represented at the day and a half meeting called by Paul Larsen, Director of Civilian Mobilization, to discuss various radiological defense problems:

NSRB - Larsen, Gill, Gallagher, Martin, Parker, Pringle, Kiefer, Lamoreaux, Biddle, and DeChant  
 AFSWP - Capt. Hanners, Lt. Comd. Campbell  
 Department of Defense - Lt. Col. McHugh and Lt. Col. Walmsley (Col. Beers' office), Col. Green (Dr. Meiling's office)  
 GSA - Gobbels and Beshers  
 PHS - Williams  
 National Institute of Health - Dr. Howard Andrews  
 AEC - Miller, Butenhoff; Deal (Second day only)

Mr. Larsen opened the meeting Monday morning with a brief statement as to the purpose of the meeting. He followed with an exposition of the problems that confront NSRB in proceeding with national planning for radiological defense. It seemed apparent that his most immediate concern was with the seminar which he is to lead at the Brookhaven course next Monday, April 24. The many and varied problems which he cited, ranging all the way from overall state and local organizations for civil defense to technical details such as air and water sampling, were set forth as problems on which definite, specific answers should be given to the students assembled at Brookhaven next Monday, before they return to their respective states.

One of his first remarks was that in his personal opinion the radiological monitoring courses were started prematurely. This sentiment was later also expressed by Eric Biddle, Consultant on Civil Defense to the Chairman, NSRB. The reasons given as underlying this opinion by Mr. Larsen were that complete plans had not yet been formulated on the matters mentioned above; specific plans for the conduct of second-level courses were not in existence; settlement upon a specific instrument or instruments had not been made and procurement therefore had not been worked out, and problems of standardization of training and equipment between Civil Defense use and Military use had not been fully considered and solved.

CLASSIFICATION CANCELLED  
 BY AUTHORITY OF DOE/OC

J. Diaz 10/15/84  
 REVIEWED BY DATE

Carl Wilson 8/7/85

By: W. Trench 6/3/87

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CD Planning

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April 20, 1950

It was apparent that a feeling of urgency existed in regard to the forthcoming seminar at Brookhaven. Larsen's feeling evidently was that the students about ready to depart for their home states and communities should be furnished with concrete answers to as many of the problems that he had enumerated in detail as possible and that if it were not possible to give such answers at that time that the Federal Government could be subject to severe criticism for not having figured all of these things out in advance of starting the actual training program. It was not expressed but probably some of the NSRB people felt that if such criticism eventuated, subsequent training programs of their own would thereby be jeopardized. Thus the impression was given that the immediate purpose of this meeting was that of collecting quickly from a variety of interested sources opinions on a multitude of subjects related to radiological defense which could be distilled and transmitted to the Brookhaven students by means of the approaching seminar. Larsen made the point that the policies to be given to the Brookhaven seminar should be released simultaneously to the students in the other courses and presumably to states which were not represented at any of the courses.

Larsen left the meeting fairly early (not returning for the later sessions) and the Chairmanship of it was assumed by Dr. Kiefer. As the discussion progressed and comments made by various of the participants indicated that they also shared the feeling, expressed above, as to the immediate purpose of the meeting, Kiefer emphasized that in addition to the immediate need for information, NSRB was desirous of drawing upon the agencies represented for help in solving all of the problems which had been set forth. In the later stages of the meeting, particularly the second day, the atmosphere of great urgency in getting final answers to the many complex problems was dispelled to a certain extent. I pointed out that many of the statements which were being made questioning the propriety of conducting the monitoring courses at this time, the fact, for instance, that many states did not have full-fledged civil defense organizations or civil defense budgets and therefore there was likelihood that second-level courses might have to be delayed for an indefinite period of time, had been raised by our own people in the training centers when the program was in the formative stages; nevertheless, it had been agreed finally by both AEC and NSRB representatives that it was worthwhile to make a start in the initial teaching training program so that all activities would not be in a state of suspended animation while all planning was being completed, both on national and state levels. I pointed out that the assumption which seemed to be implicit in the NSRB presentation, namely, that the states, upon return of their representatives from the training courses would immediately start out on second-level training and perhaps go astray in so doing because they did not have all of the answers to the problems which were being

April 20, 1950

Discussed at this meeting was undoubtedly unwarranted. My reasons for this feeling were the known fact that many of the states have neither personnel nor funds available for the immediate undertaking of second-level courses and the fact that those states which may be fortunate enough to be in a position to start fairly soon will require a period of time in which to make the necessary arrangements. This view was apparently concurred in at the second day's meeting by Mr. Biddle (in revision of his earlier comments about the prematurity of the courses) and by other participants. Dr. Kiefer seemed to be of this opinion at this time also, making the statement that the problem of the timing of actual training and the completion of other necessary elements of planning was like the question of the chicken and the egg—questionable which should come first.

In the discussion concerning instruments great divergence of opinion was immediately evident between the AFSWP representative, Commander Campbell, and the AEC point of view as expressed by Bob Butenhoff. Campbell's emphatic position was that the state of the development of radiation detection instruments today was not much advanced over what it had been 3 or 4 years ago, and that it was ridiculous to assume that any great forward strides would be made in the near future. He expressed the opinion that the halogen tube instrument developed by the NYCO should be thoroughly proven before a lot of money was spent on it and that if it was perfected it probably would not be a very good instrument anyway. He emphasized the need for ruggedness in an instrument and said that at the moment the only instrument which met this test and other rigid specifications set up by the Armed Forces was an instrument which they were currently procuring, the AN/PDR-1-1.

The consensus of opinion seemed to be, with some reservations, that for civil defense monitoring purposes an ionization chamber instrument with top scale limit of 500 r.p.h. was needed in quantity rather than Geiger counter type instruments; also that a dosimeter with a range of 100 to 250 r.p.h. was needed. Some participants believed that a dosimeter instrument with this range could be developed in six months. It was agreed that present dosimeters such as the Beckman and Kelly-Koet models were totally inadequate because of their relatively low range. The following types of survey instruments presently available were discussed: National Technical Laboratory model MX-6, Victoreen 247, Kelly-Koet, AN/PDR-1-1, and the Espey Company Juno model. It was stated that present cost of these instruments was approximately \$250 each, but it was believed this cost could be cut to between \$100 and \$150 if orders in quantity were made.

For the purpose of summarizing the lengthy discussions several assumptions were made by Dr. Kiefer in order to fit the tentative

April 20, 1950

conclusions into a hypothetical situation. These were that the monitoring service within a state or local civil defense organization would be set up as a separate, specialized function divided into two types of teams--local survey groups and mobile groups which would be able to make laboratory analyses of air, water and soil samples. It was agreed that all civil defense personnel including rescue squads, firemen, policemen, etc. as well as monitors, should be equipped with the dosimeter described above. Also that the local monitor teams should use the survey instrument with top-scale of 500 r; Geiger counters would be used to make house-to-house surveys whenever such surveys became possible, probably some days after the actual explosion. Campbell described a "field laboratory" presently under development by the Armed Forces which will be mounted in trucks and equipped to do alpha checks on air and water samples, etc. The group seemed to feel that such mobile laboratories assigned to strategic coastal and other areas would be sufficient in fairly small numbers for this type of monitoring service.

The figure of 100 r for maximum permissible exposure under disaster conditions was suggested by Dr. Andrews. This figure, it was agreed, should not be released officially under any circumstances until agreement of many competent people in the field had been obtained. I pointed out that Dr. Shields Warren and General Cooney should have an opportunity to comment on this point before any action was taken which would connote, officially or by inference, AEC participation in the determination. Others present stated also that Drs. Failla, Taylor, Stafford Warren, and representatives of the radiology profession be apprised and given opportunity to discuss this matter because of its far-reaching implications and the probability of great consternation if such a horrendous level were announced without any previous discussion.

The subject of masks and protective clothing was also discussed. Sentiment was expressed both for and against the equipping of civil defense personnel with masks, coveralls, helmets, gloves, shoe coverings, etc. The argument was put forward that to emphasize these measures for civil defense personnel while prescribing a maximum permissible dose of 100 r was very inconsistent. No definite conclusion was reached.

The last order of business was a discussion regarding formalization of the group. It was decided that such a group would be of definite value in civil defense planning and that it would be established on a more formal basis to include all of the agencies represented at this meeting, plus the Bureau of Standards on a regular basis and other agencies such as the Department of Agriculture, Federal Trade Commission, etc., on a specialized basis when and if subjects were discussed on which their opinions were desired. Accordingly, the NSRB will request by letter to the heads of these agencies the appointment of regular members to the working group, which as yet bears no official name.

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J. A. Derry

- 5 -

April 20, 1950

Because of the length of the meeting and the large number of participants, many topics related to civilian radiological defense were discussed, and also some bearing not too direct a relationship to the primary subject. For that reason this report does not include everything that was discussed but it is believed that the high points have been covered.